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WALTER'S COURTSHIP, ETC.



ARTHUR H. BROWNING



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the 1990s, the number of people in the world who are undernourished has increased from 600 million to 800 million. The number of people who are malnourished has increased from 1.2 billion to 1.5 billion. The number of people who are obese has increased from 100 million to 300 million.

The World Bank has estimated that the cost of malnutrition to the world economy is \$100 billion per year. The cost of obesity to the world economy is \$100 billion per year. The cost of undernutrition to the world economy is \$100 billion per year.

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Walter's Courtship,

ETC.



WALTER'S COURTSHIP,

ETC.

BY

ARTHUR HENRY BROWNING.

"Seek for his heart within his book."

Ionica.

ETON:

EDWARD P. WILLIAMS.

—
1865.

20a. k. 17.



TO MY FRIENDS,
A POOR RETURN FOR MANY KINDNESSES,
THESE PAGES,
WITH A SINCERE WISH THAT HE AND THEY WERE WORTHIER,
ARE
AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED :

A. H. B.

CHALVEY COURT, SLOUGH :
Christmas, 1864.

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INTRODUCTORY.

INTRODUCTORY.

I.

I.

I dwell beside the fields I love,
By Thames' silver-winding stream :
Gray castle towers piled above ;
Below, the pious Henry's dream.

II.

No pathway but my feet have worn
In park or meadow, boy and man :
I know the waving breadth of corn,
The ruffled anger of the swan.

III.

And young are old, and old are dead,
Since first I drew the sacred air :
Gray locks or scant on many a head,
And change on changes everywhere.

IV.

Yet scarce an unfamiliar face
In street or village passes by :
One heated, labouring in the race ;
One calm, with front of victory.

V.

Or some gay-hearted boy perchance
Looks on me with his father's eyes,
Recalling in th' unconscious glance
A thousand early memories

VI.

Of pleasures shared, divided fears,
High hopes, perhaps a broken vow :
I greet the friend of those dead years,
And marvel how he bears him now.

VII.

I move amongst them, young and old,
And something whisper, something hide :
Should any say 'tis over-bold
To tempt the colder world outside,

VIII.

I'll answer, that the lesser lay,
From one known voice amid the throng,
Hath sometime charmed a grief away,
That would not yield to larger song.

II.

I.

THEY tell me that my verse is fair,
And like a rivulet smoothly flows,
That you may look on anywhere,
In valleys never white with snows ;

II.

A purling stream, that you may cross
In winter with a dripping knee ;
In summer, lie chin-deep in moss,
And hear the large low-hovering bee

III.

Hum in the many-cowslipped grass ;
At foot, the tiny waters glide :
Or, if the whim may take you, pass
With run and leap, from side to side.

IV.

They tell me Grace is less than Power,
And force atones a rougher vein :
Such song may wile a careless hour ;
But, closed, is never sought again.

V.

Such well may be ; but, O ! the joy,
The ravishment that flows from song
Brings back so keenly all the boy,
That silence seems the greater wrong.

III.

I.

THE eyes that on a mirror rest
Their true expression see not there,
(As this to others is confest,)
But something, it may be, more fair

II.

Or less, but different, as the light
Of star from star in yonder blue ;
Or as some hearts, as black as night,
Wear angel smiles for me and you.

III.

For, such have been, if truth be told,
Few know the richness of the mine,
And few th' alloy within the gold,
Till use and time have set the sign.

IV.

Ah whither am I led? To this,—
I sing at will, at morn or even,
And know not whence the music is,
But only that a voice is given.

IV.

I.

SOME say 'tis idle thus to weave
Unreal fancies of the brain ;
That few will heed, and none believe
These fitful cries of pleasure-pain,

II.

Which, breaking forth, as sudden light
In darkness, startle and are gone,—
Mere echoes of the common night
Or common heart's Æolian tone.

III.

And yet it comes within my prayer,
Some hand this chequered page may turn ;
And, like the vein empurpling there
Its dainty whiteness, may discern

IV.

Faint-whispered themes of song, akin
To those that unrecorded lie,
Till one great lord arise within,
And stir the springs of melody.

V.

If such there be to them, to *you*,
The riddle of my heart is plain ;
For Friendship, Beauty, Love are true,
And ne'er, believe me, spoke in vain.

TO A. C.

NUBENTI.

GLAD bells will ring upon your marriage morn,
And I would be as one of them—no more ;
A voice of welcome, with the good old chime
Of health and wealth, and length of days, and peace.
Joy to you both ! and blessing on the vow,
That, whispered e'er so low, is heard in Heaven.
Joy to you both ! far dearer hands than mine
Will strew your pathway with sweet Autumn flowers ;
Yet would I be as one of those that strew,
Content, if only fall on this my flower
A moment's lightness of your happy feet.

WALTER'S COURTSHIP,

An Eclogue.

WALTER'S COURTSHIP.

I.

WALTER and I were friends, close bosom friends ;
The world said so, the world for once was right :
And folks who knew us both, averred in jest
That meeting one the other brought to mind.

It happened thus : One day when hounds were out,
And we were skirting woodland,—for the pack
Still hung in covert, though the fox had broke ;—
This Walter hailed me with a compliment
For some small feat of horsemanship achieved ;
A tried conclusion with a post and rail,
Which, hitting hard, my horse had fallen at

Unless for timely aid of hand and heel.
And as the pace allowed, we fell to talk,
Mere sportsmen's talk, of horses, hounds, and scent,
And rode together through the later day.

Now when the last "who-whoop" had died away
In echo, words of gratulation passed
From mouth to mouth, the grinning fox dis-masked,
The brush presented, and when bloody-mouthed
The dogs had tussled o'er the reeking game,
Forgetting ties of friendship and of kin,
And panting lay, or rolled upon the turf,
And men this way and that by twos and threes
Were scattering, Walter said, "I live close by ;
"Your way is mine ; come home, and rest awhile."
Agreed ! for something in the man appeared
That drew me towards him, and I longed to see
If better knowledge would the first approve.

Refreshment o'er, I mounted horse again,
And wended homeward, musing as I rode,—
"I like that Walter ; he I think's a man,

Sound-hearted, and with brains ; a little rough,
But with the roughness of new wine, that gives
Such promise of rare mellowness in age.

And from that day sprang up a brotherhood
Of friendship, growing with the growth of years,
Till scarce a wish arose in Walter's heart
That was not parent of a wish in mine ;
Like parts in music by a master wrought,
Now one way moving, now in opposite,
Now both resolving to an unison,
Yet alway blended in true harmony ;
So gracious was the motion of our lives.

(With a Photograph.)

I.

No flatt'ring painter's art is here,
To add, to soften, to conceal ;
But Light, than pencil more sincere,
The truer man has dared reveal.

II.

And if with happy smile it seem
The features of your friend are lit,
Let fancy have her way, and deem
"A thought of me did kindle it."

III.

And he will answer, if you say
The lines are harsh, the look severe,
"The friend I love was far away :
How different had he been here !"

II.

It chanced one winter season, ere the days
Began to wrestle with the conqueror Night,
When weeks of frost had crisped the glittering roads,

And ice was on the river and the lake,
This letter reached me,—“ Friend, I am in love ;
“ Come over quickly, and I'll tell you all.”
I laughed, and like a waiting-maid, who hears
Her mistress' bell, I shouldered stick and went.

Slipped, with open vest, and pipe in mouth,
Half dazed with blinking at the beech-wood fire,
As he were sick or tired, I found my friend.
Our greeting o'er, first Walter, “ Well ! what now ?”
“ I came to hear,” I said ; and sat me down
Where was my wont, and waited on his mood.

We spoke but little for the first half-hour,
For Walter had a strange and silent way
Of saying less with lip than with his eyes ;
And such short sentences as “ Won't do, Won't do,”
“ I don't like that,” or, “ That's the meaning o't,”
Did duty for the speech of other men.

At length, when I had humoured him enough,
I hinted at his letter, when he winced,
And eyed me with a look half pleased, half shy,

Across the fire ; then gravely muttered " Well !"
And coughing down reluctance, thus began :

" A certain Emily, who lives hard by
" With her old father and a maiden Aunt,"
(Her mother had been dead a many years)—
" You know the house, it has a lake in front,
" Came down to see the skaters from the lawn,
" Not once, but twice and thrice, day after day,
" As if she wished herself to don the irons.
" To see a Lady shivering on the bank
" In muff and fur, but purple with the cold,
" While I was giddy from the outer-edge,
" And glowing like a furnace "—" Stop," I said,
" I see it all with most dramatic eye :
" You volunteer to teach her, fit them on—
" The skates, I mean—manipulate the straps ;
" Then o'er the level guide her timid foot,
" And rob the treacherous ancle of its weight,
" And court a smiling danger now and then.
" Albeit, methinks the danger's greater now,

"For with the frost your occupation goes,

"And here's a thaw ! Is not my reading true ?"

At this my friend threw out a stately puff,
That seemed almost a lover's sigh in smoke,
And answered, nodding at me, "Right you are !"

I mused a minute on his handsome face,
Broad open brow, voluminous silky beard,
That hugged his bosom in a double fork,
As is the fashion of these hairy times ;
And thinking a true maid might well do worse
Than trust her all to the brave heart beneath,
Gaily broke in, "I guess you mean to win ?"
"Aye, aye ; but how ?" said Walter ; "there's the rub ;
"I shall not see her now except at Church,
"As I have seen some scores of Sundays back,
"And passed with just a greeting in the porch."
"Her father," I demanded, "what of him ?"
"A gentleman of the old and stately school,
"Who'd lift his hat a dozen times a day,
"If I should meet him, with a "How d'ye do,"

“Fair weather, Sir,” or “Rain is threatening,”
“Leaving unsaid all else I want to hear.
“Still, if he talked an hour, he could not speak
“More plainly than I understand him thus—‘Good sir,
“‘I have a daughter, a most favoured child,
“‘The solace and delight of my old age ;
“‘You’d take her from me to a younger home :
“‘But trust me, Sir, you shall not, while I live.’”

I marvelled much at Walter’s length of speech
Unusual, whence I gathered that his mind
Had pondered well the chances of his suit,
And saw the issue, but the way was dark.
Remembering too, that maids in every age,
Of worth and beauty rare enough to woo,
Were dragon-guarded, girt about with flames
And perils of the sword, and of the flood,
And that the harder won the higher prized,—
I counselled courage, and to bide his time.

Whereon we passed to old familiar talk,
The farm, the sheep, the bullocks, and the colts ;

Which promised best ; and should he sell the mare
That carried him so well from Shankton Holt
To Ashby, when he jumped the Whissendine ;
And when the hounds would be about again ;
And when the frost be out of ground, for he
Was tired of this enforced idleness :
When, on a sudden, like a man who sees
A vision of the things he covets most,
That long has floated round him like a mist,
Take shape and colour, gross and palpable,
Walter arose, and, opening larger eyes,
Struck out this flash,—“ I’ll go and dig for gold
“ In California, or Vancouver’s isle,
“ And come back rich ;”—“ Or not at all,” I said,
“ Or just a beggar.”—Like a lemon poured
On seething milk, that hisses and subsides,
So fell my words on Walter’s petulance.
I knew the man, and what was in his mind,
And preached of patience : “ All would yet be well ;
“ True courage showed itself in waiting for

“The thing desired, as much as in pursuit :

“And over-haste was laughed at by delay.”

Then as I rose to go, remembering
Some rhymes myself had fashioned in the days
When, like my friend, I languished for a maid
As fair as Emily, and thinking too
Their jingle might make music in his ears
When I was gone, with due solemnity
And flourish, these heroics chanted forth :

P A R I S.

If I'd an orchard full of fruit—

But this is quite between us—

With Paris I would follow suit,

And give the whole to Venus.

Juno might promise wealth and power,

A sceptre and a throne too ;

But who could hesitate an hour

If single and alone too ?


Minerva, first of female sages,
Might swear in vain my mind
To fill with wit and lore of ages,
And leave out—womankind.
Then honour to the shepherd boy,
Who taught the world we dwell in,
How men should risk another Troy,
To win a second Helen !

“ Yea ! I believe, and I will hold the creed,
“ Against the world, o’er-master it who can,
“ That he who finds the thing which his own soul
“ Confesses in its strength most beautiful,
“ This he should follow with bold heart and true,
“ Nor cease till he shall win the prize and wear,
“ And having won—let other men despair !”

Then Walter, who had risen, to and fro
Pacing the room, as if a spirit moved,
Half to himself, and half in answer, thus :
“ The time *must* come, when thou wilt be my own,”

He said, "it cannot be but that 'twill come."
"As tracks the mariner a pathless sea,
"And knows that howsoever day by day
"A watery waste may chide his longing eye,
"The haven of his rest will rise at last ;
"So I, with only for my pilot, Love,
"And trusting faith, within a patient heart,
"For all I see not *where* the end may lie,
"Nor seem to hasten, or make good my way,
"(So say the watchers ;)—for all this, I know
"Sweet winds will one day waft me into port."

Whereto rejoining, I, with secret smile,
Well pleased to note the fervour of his mood,
And to his humour suiting mine, began :
"I too have looked on Beauty, till my heart
"Within me fluttered like a captive bird,
"Who feels a breath of summer on his wings,
"And for one flight into the free, glad air,
"One carol there, would forfeit all, and die.
"Aye, and I said, such worship filled my soul,



“That had one offered here a kingdom, there
“The maid I loved, to choose for once and all ;
“I would have clasped her in these joyful arms,
“And sealed my glowing answer on her lips !”

III.

The Winter o'er, came Spring, with boisterous gusts
And slanting showers, big with summer wealth ;
And as the days did gather heat and length,
From green to golden waved the corn, and fell
Before the reapers, and the fields were bare.

And Autumn came : in flocks the sparrows wheeled
From tree to hedgerow, broken up their homes ;
Smooth-shining chestnuts rolled about the path,
Waved over by the many-crested plume ;
And on the towering elm a yellow leaf
Was waiting for a whisper from the North
To fall ;—but first to one the whisper came :
Her father, whom my Walter loved, he died,


The good old man, in peace and full of years ;
And days of mourning were for Emily ;
And Walter said—" I have not seen her face
" For months and months ; she keeps her veil so close."
" Let be," I answered ; " wait till it is raised,
" Or laid aside." But I perceived the man
Was chafing, like a reined and bitted steed,
That knows the game's afoot, and longs to fly.

I.

As one who starts at infant's cry,
So throbs my pulse at thy dear name ;
As one who, trembling, fears reply,
That, once delivered, dooms to shame ;

II.

So trembleth all my doubting heart,
Lest love should have been nursed in vain ;
So fears to choose the worthier part,
And know the bliss, or end the pain.



III.

Ah ! from thy height of peace divine,
As might the breeze a rose-leaf stir,
Breathe o'er me some unspoken sign,
To be the lips' interpreter :

IV.

Else, he who pleads is as the bird*
That dies in music on the lake,—
A little while its voice is heard,
A little while its heart will break.

IV.

So sped the time.—One day I heard a hoof
Come pattering up the gravel from the lodge,
And guessed it carried Walter : out I sprang :

* Then if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,
Fading in music. *Merchant of Venice, Act III, Sc. 11.*

And with some wonder, for his eye was bright
With frolic, and his horse was all a-foam,
I asked, "What news? is any sport abroad?"
Stroking his beard with either hand, he said,
"I've seen my Emily walking on the road
"Three furlongs hence."—"Of course you spoke to her?"
"Not I," quoth he: "I put my horse at fence,
"And rode three fields without once looking back;
"Went at the biggest places in the hedge,
"And nearly came a cropper at the brook."
"That's well," I said; "yet not so very well;
"You should have *come the cropper*, head and ears,
"As emblematic of the total plunge
"In the deep waters and abyss of Love!
"And is your Emily then so terrible,
"That you should flee her like a rated hound,
"And give her matter for an afternoon's
"Bewilderment—no more, Sir!—that a man
"And horse should start as both had seen a ghost;
"Because a Lady walked along the road?"

"Ungracious Sir ! is this the way to woo ?

"To lose the golden opportunity

"Which many months you've pined and fretted for ?"

Then, as we paced the lawn, for now his horse
Was pondering o'er his master's loss of wits

With provender before him in the stall,

I said, "You ought to write to her." "Too late,"

Cried Walter, "I have written, yesterday !"

I whistled out, "What answer ?" — "None as yet."

"Too late indeed," I said ; "for I had planned

"That you should breathe your passion out in rhyme,—

"A trifle, but with truth and meaning in't,

"Relating to that evening I have heard

"You point to as the happiest in life,

"When you called in about the parish rate,

"And stayed to supper at her father's house

"About the skating time, two years ago."

"I don't think much of verse : a woman likes

"To hear, 'I love you,' best in wholesome prose,"

Said Walter, with a solemn serious air :

“ Still, not to disappoint my poet-friend,
“ If you propose to read across the wine,
“ I’ll play the list’ner, and the critic too.”


Sprang to my lips an answer somewhat rough ;
But ere ’twas out, they parted with a smile ;
For I remembered, that a friend in love
Hath leave and licence more than all the world :
Then after dinner, at his bidding, thus :

I.

Dear girl ! my heart hath never beat
For other as it beat for thee,
When, on that eve, the first we met,
I sat in pleased expectancy

II.

Beside you, at your father’s board,
And shared the hospitable meal ;
Confessed an ancient fire restored,
And felt as I had ceased to feel ;



III.

Observing well your gracious ways
Of welcome to the stranger-guest,
Of this and that a word in praise,
As thinking—"which will please him best?"

IV.

And when my too officious arm
The steaming cup had nearly spilled,
Your eyes forgave me, and a charm
Of new emotion through me thrilled.

V.

Ask me not what ; 'tis in my rhymes :
I could not, if I would, disguise ;
But ah ! I'd sin a thousand times,
To meet forgiveness in those eyes !

VI.

Dear eyes ! in mercy always shine,
For love hath many lightnings there :
Dear lips ! that have replied to mine,
Be never mute when mine's the prayer !

VII.

And when you floated from the room,
As on some household errand bent,
To me it seemed mid-winter gloom
Behind you gathered as you went.

VIII.

I could have wished to stir the fire,
So sickly-pale the candles burned ;
But you came back with my desire,
And all the cheerful light returned.

IX.

Then, after supper, when I sang
That foolish song of love-sick maid,
Like merry bells your laughter rang,—
Far sweeter music than I played.

Hereat, my audience, wagging doubtful head,
Broke in, “I never play’d or sang a note ;
“She knows it too :” but I, unheeding, save
With finger raised for silence, thus resumed :

X.

At last, Good Night ! with shaken hands
And farewell spoken at the door ;
I to my home across the lands,
You to the sacred chamber-floor ;

XI.

While Fancy whispered, "'Ere she sleep,
"Will gentle thoughts her bosom fill
"Of him, with whom in memory deep
"That happy night abideth still?"

"The last line's true," said Walter, "that is all ;
"For I remember, as I sauntered home,
"Dreaming the time would come, we should not part,
"Kind fortune favouring, with a mere 'Good-Night,'
"As you and I must now, for see 'tis late ;
"And who shall say if, while I loiter here,
"A letter lies not, waiting to be read,
"Upon the table in my desolate room,
"Which will to-morrow gild with summer joy,
"Or leave it cheerless as my road to-night?"

Thus spake my friend, full-hearted, while his voice
A little trembled : then arose in haste,
And reached a hand of farewell, and was gone.

THE GIFT.

(Rubies and Opals.)

I.

Wear for my sake ; and let the bauble lie
Thy bosom near, as would the giver rest :
It cannot sparkle brightlier than thine eye,
Nor closer cling than he would fain be prest.

II.

Wear for my sake ; and say, when friends admire,
Herein the symbol of two hearts is seen ;
One, crimson-flushed with Love, and Love's desire ;
One, paler-tinted, as the gems between.

What need of more ? A prosperous answer came,
A meeting, and a pouring out of hearts,
That had too long been sundered ; then the troth,
And, following on, the wedding day, and I

Was there, and drank to health of bride and groom,
And flung the shoe; and, 'ere a year was out,
Beside the font, said, "I renounce them all:
"His name is Walter;" for as brave a boy
As ever winced at water.



FLORA.



Two winters o'er since Flora passed away,
And still I wear these weeds : too long perhaps ;
Yet have I not the heart to put them off,
For colours vex me when they come too near,
And seem to move me further from my child.
Forgive my foolishness : I am a mother ;
And children dead are mother's children still.

We called our darling FLORA from her birth,
And she grew up into a very flower
Thro' seven summers, lovelier in each,
Until the end ; 'twas sudden at the last,
Yet half-expected. If you suffer me,
I'll tell you of the end, and how it came.
I have no pain in speaking of her now,

But only sorrow, that abides with me
For ever, like an inmate of the house.

She was unlike her sisters, unlike all ;
None other clasped so tight, no other cheek
So warmly clung to mine, her tremulous lips
Parted with whisper, like the merest sigh,—
“ Tell Flora that you love her, as she loves.”

And often she would leave her mates at play,
A choir of voices calling after her,
And, springing to my presence, climb my knee,
And tossing back her amber-waving hair,
And fastening on me crystal-orbèd eyes,
With more than a child's fervour grasp my neck,
And murmur—“ Love me always till I die.”
Love was her food, her life's necessity,
The breath she drew must needs be warm with love,
Or it would pain her, like a keen east wind.

But ah ! I weary you, and cannot bring
My voice to tell you, as I purposed,
Of all the end.—The little lily drooped,

Like a cut flower, and we, who ministered
About the fluttering life, foresaw, for all
We hid it from the other, what would be.
Until one morn, that followed on a night
Of watching, and of tears in many eyes,
Her spotless soul ascended whence it came,
And I was left with sorrow, like an heir.

The little mound, where swells the greenest turf,
Is hers,—a stone at head and foot to mark ;
And in the Church, just o'er us as we kneel,
A marble, pure as Flora lived and died,
Tell of her love, her sweetness, and our loss,
Which when 'twas new, I said in my despair,
“ Ah ! surely evil days are coming on us,
“ And Thou in mercy, LORD, hast taken her.”

And it was so : a tide of trouble flowed,
Which nearly whelmed us ; but we beat it back,
And now 'tis at the ebb ; and I have set
A seal upon my grief in these poor words,
Which some have said I murmur in my sleep :

I.

Henceforth I will not think of Death
As that abhorred, unsightly thing
Of visage dark, and sable wing,
Which mortal fear imagineth :

II.

I will not say (since she is dead,
My Flora ! lovelier than whom
No flower descended to the tomb,
The turf above no fairer head,)

III.

That He, the tyrant, feared of men,
Is ruthless, cruel, fierce, unkind,
Forbearing with the calmer mind
To wish my darling back again :

IV.

But rather deem, with will subdued,
That the Strong Voice, whom Death obeys
Called her along the starry ways,
To join the Angel sisterhood ;

V.

And thence my child in fuller bloom,
True to the promise of her dawn,
Shall hail me on the radiant morn
That rolls the stone from every tomb.

VI.

Vain boast ! for nature yet will keep
Her way : my Flora's gentle face
I seek in its accustomed place,
And, seeking, cry aloud and weep.

I.


Not felon-like, with stealthy knife,
Or wild-beast rising from his lair,
To slay the traveller unaware,
Does Death invade the house of Life :

II.

Not seldom He, we seek in whom
Direction on the way to rest,
Points a kind finger down the crest
Of that drear hill that hides the tomb :

III.

And, musing thus, I seem to see,
That when my love was most bestowed,
When from my heart most freely flowed
The tide of mother's ecstasy ;



IV.

I seem to see, too soon for grief,
Too late for solace, that in vain
I would have died to save thee pain,
For still thy days had been as brief.

V.

Then voices near me whisper, "Fold
Thy sorrow up ; believe and bear :
How should I wish thee elsewhere
Than in the Eternal arms of old ?"

SPRING IN WINTER,

(A Picture.)

*A glimpse of spring, in winter's sober gloom ;
A threat of autumn, ere the corn be ripe :
So runs the restless world, change upon change ;
And each a voice to touch the minds of men.*

How clear against the sky yon naked oak,
A sleeping Titan, shows his rounded head,
And sinewy arms ; one tawny-wrinkled leaf,
Which winds of yester-eve forbore to strip,
Like a last shred of virtue from a heart,
O'erlooks his fallen fellows underneath ;
As the sad remnant of a conquered host,
That lives to tell the tale.

No breath astir, no sound ; and but for this,—
This hush of life in creature and in air,—
And that the sun, tho' yet 'tis hardly noon,

Seems little higher than an arrow's flight
In heaven, and I can look him in the face,
Who drove me to the shelter of the wood,
When last I rested here ;—I could believe
The primrose and the violet near me bloomed,
And almost listen for the nightingale.

Fair season ! to the eye that looks aright ;
When, like a happy mother, who hath wrought
A long, long day for all her riotous brood,
And fed them to the full, now watches o'er
Closed eyes, and quiet breath from parted lips,
While yet her heart to-morrow's care revolves ;
So Nature smiles above her perfect toil,
And dreams new marvels for the year to come.

Like faery cities, roofed with pinnacles,
The homestead hid among the golden thatch,
Nestle the farms beneath the sheltering hills,
Long level fields between us, like a sea.

The little seed is sleeping in the dark,
With next year's spring beneath it underground ;

The furrow spreads aloft his fallow breast,
And grateful drinks the fertilising air.
But, haply, ere I see this place again,
Storms shall sweep o'er it, hail, and beating rain ;
And yellow brooks, where now the silver runs ;
And howling winds, with melting of the snows.



AUTUMN.

NOVEMBER light,—the day three-quarters done,
And dim with vaporous hues of falling eve ;
The dew-drop on the blade where it was born,—
Like tears of sorrow, never wiped away :
The brown earth bare ; thin shivering trees aloft ;
No sign to tell the travel of the Sun,
Whither he tendeth ; something of a calm,
A stillness, not unbroken, over all :—
How many among us find more kinship here,
Than in the glitter of a gaudy May !

[The following Poems are of an earlier date than the preceding.]

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.



IN MEMORIAM

F. A. K. B.

Who died and was buried at sea,

April 27th, 1849.

At my feet the wavelet breaketh,
As I wander on the shore ;
And, in solemn whisper, speaketh
Weep no more !

Th' eternal seas he lieth under,
Deeper than a thought can go,
'Till the world be rent asunder,
Who may know ?

*Me the mistress Moon was bearing
From the chambers of the West ;
Thitherwards a bark was steering
Sorrow-drest.

On a sudden, rounding slowly,
Idly flapped the loosened sail,
And a voice went deep and holy
Up the gale :

And I knew that men were mourning
O'er a darling comrade's bier,
Ere a rough lid, sea-ward turning,
Veiled a tear.

* I have read somewhere, that it is highly probable that the wave which breaks on our shores to-day, formed part of the waters of the Pacific Ocean not many months ago.

Swiftly as the dead descended,
Nereids caught him under sea,
(Ere the requiem was ended
And mourners free,)

Thousand fathom down they bore him,
As Angels might thro' upper air,
White arms underneath, and o'er him
Dripping hair.

In the caves of branching coral,
Whither sorrow cannot come
Or the jar of earthly quarrel,
Is his home.

Wherefore weep? Who would not rather
Rest within an Ocean cave,
Than to worse corruption gather
In cold earth-grave?

Yea, whatever Earth confideth
To the keeping of the wave,
Tenderly a sea-nymph hideth
In coral cave.

There thy brother's mortal lieth,
Till, when Time be finishèd,
To trumpet's voice the Deep replieth,
And yields its dead !



VERE NOVO.

I.

FROM laughing lips of grey-eyed morn,
A fresher tide of life is gushing ;
About the bottom of the thorn,
The maiden bud is coyly blushing.

II.

I feel upon me like a hand
Lifting me up, the weight of Spring ;
And as the baby-leaves expand,
My spirit seems awakening.

III.

Hath then this mingled life of ours
Aught of a tidal ebb and flow ?
Hath man a sympathy with flowers,
And with them droop, revive, and grow ?

IV.

It may be so ; for Life is Life,
Intense or subtle, less or more ;
And wages the eternal strife
With death and darkness world all o'er.

V.

In youth we seek to carve our name
Deep-lettered on some hearts of worth ;
And fancy we may trace the same,
Till time restoreth earth to earth :

VI.

Nor know that, as on living tree,
Rough bark will over-grow our toil,
As surely will the world ; and we
But hail this knowledge with a smile ;—

VII.

A smile, to think it 'scaped our sense
How like in this were hearts and trees ;
So soft to court our confidence,
So swift to hide our memories !

FOR MUSIC.

I.

IF love were like a flowing river,
Serene, and bright, and cheerful ever,
I'd make my heart a channel wide,
And fill it with the gracious tide.

II.

But Love, alas ! in turn will seem
A sleepy pool—a sweeping stream ;
Or, later still, alone is seen
The rift through which it once hath been.

III.

Or could the heart, by Love elated,
Cease on the instant Love abated,
I'd vow my vow to some bright eye ;
And, when it wearied, hope to die.

IV.

But ah ! the slow pulse traileth on—
All ardour chilled, all spirit gone ;
Like shrine defaced by ruthless hands,
Its worth is gone, the ruin stands !



STANZAS.

I.

SHE was as a star for beauty, as the morn for purity,
And her virtues seemed to fall about her as she moved along;
Just as you might scatter rose-leaves, wand'ring in a rosary,
For the wantonness of plucking, for the sweetness of the
wrong.

II.

Still she moved on unencumbered with the burden of her
graces,
Free as any note of music you might loosen from its string ;
And on whomsoe'er she smiled, you seemed to look on
lovely faces,
So her beauty multiplied itself from her eyes wandering.

III.

Once to see her was to love her ! for her spirit seemed to
say,

‘ Come not near me, or else love me.’ She could not in
smallest part

Recognise the fine distinctions of our colder, common clay,
Nothing short of love the purest could fill up her breadth
of heart.

IV.

Like the star, which sailors cling to in their hour of sorest
need,

Like some well-belovèd token with heart-beating we hang
over ;

So we gathered round, more plainly all her open soul to
read ;

So contended each with each one, more and more to strive
to love her.

ETON: E. P. WILLIAMS, TYP.







